

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is in response to the Office Action dated September 5, 2008. Claims 1-27 are pending. Claims 1-26 stand rejected in the outstanding Office Action. Claims 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 have been amended. New claim 27 has been added.

The rejection of claims 1-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Mizumoto (US 6,409,597) in view of Fukuda (US 6,670,957) is respectfully traversed.

Amended claims 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 now recite (in substantially similar way) “said difference length calculated by said difference length calculating programmed logic circuitry is reduced by a predetermined rate when said difference length exists, *regardless of the direction in the change of the speed of the player character in the game space*”. Support for the amendment can be found, for example, in Fig. 5 and the Abstract of the instant specification. Mizumoto/Fukuda fails to teach or suggest this feature.

Mizumoto discloses changing the distance between a virtual camera and a game character (e.g., a car) according to predetermined rules based on a condition of the game character. The virtual camera is positioned at a default position behind the moving car, e.g., P3 in Fig. 5. If one of a list of conditions occurs as the car is moving, then the virtual camera moves to a predetermined set position at a predetermined set speed. For example, if the car has crashed, then the virtual camera moves to point P1 (closest to the car) at speed 4 points/frame (wherein the whole range from P1 to P2 is 500 points). If the car has spun, then the virtual camera moves to point 300 at a speed of 3 points/frame. If none of the enumerated conditions is satisfied, then the virtual camera is positioned at the default point P3 and moves at a speed of 2 points/frame. The Examiner acknowledged that Mizumoto does not teach changing the distance between the

virtual camera and the moving game character at a predetermined rate so that the distance is shortened. The Examiner then turned to Fukuda for the missing limitation.

Fukuda discloses a method for moving the location of a virtual camera in a game space so that it follows the movement of a game character, e.g., a plane. Regarding the positional relationship between the location 601 of the moving plane and the location 606 of the virtual camera (c.g., camera setup point), Fukuda offers three conditions (1) to (3) for determining the position of the camera setup point 606 (line 50, col. 12 to line 27, col. 13). Based on the values of a coefficient “a” and coefficient “M”, “the camera setup point 606 moves backward relative to the moving direction of the controlled object 601 as the moving speed of the controlled object 601 is increased”, lines 28-36, col. 13. In other words, as the plane speeds away, the virtual camera remains further away behind. This can be seen in Fig. 11 and also in Fig. 13, which shows pictorial images photographed by the virtual camera 609 when the plane is in positions (a) to (c), corresponding to Figs. 13A to 13C. The Examiner then asserted that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to combine the teachings Fukuda and Mizumoto to arrive at the claimed invention.

In response to Applicant’s arguments in the Response filed May 20, 2008, that there is no explicit teaching or suggestion in Fukuda of moving the virtual camera closer to the moving object, the Examiner claimed that “logic would follow that if the virtual camera moves further from the controller object according to a moving speed of the controlled object, then the virtual camera would also move closer to the controller object when the moving speed of the controlled object decreases. If such does not exist according to the applicant’s logic, then the camera position would move further and further away from the controlled object until it can no longer be seen by the player”.

Fukuda, in several occasions, teaches clearly that as the moving object speeds away, the position of the virtual camera falls behind, i.e., its distance from the moving object increases (see, for example, Abstract, col. 3, lines 10-14, col. 13, lines 28-35, col. 15, lines 2-4, col. 20, lines 34-39). The purpose for this is so that, as the player increases the moving speed of the controlled object, a pictorial image surrounding the object taken by the virtual camera broadens depending on the increase amount of the moving speed, thus yielding a better point of view of the game scene (col. 3, lines 14-25). Fukuda does not teach or suggest moving the virtual camera closer to the moving object as the speed of the moving object decreases, in other words, Fukuda does not teach or suggest moving the virtual camera closer to the moving object regardless of whether the speed of the moving object increases or decreases. This would defeat the purpose of Fukuda's invention, which is to move away from the moving object so that the player experiences a wider view of the whole game scene. The Examiner's assertion that logic would dictate Fukuda's teaching can be extrapolated to imply that the virtual camera would move closer to the moving object as the object slows down, is clearly based on Applicant's own specification, and represents hindsight.

With the above amendments, it is made clear that the distance between the virtual camera and the moving object decreases even when the speed of said moving object increases. This is opposite to what is taught in Fukuda, where as the moving object speeds away, the virtual camera falls behind.

For the above reasons, claims 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23 and 25 are allowable.

New claim 27 contains limitations similar to those in claim 1 (e.g., citing "said difference length calculated by said difference length calculating programmed logic circuitry is reduced by

a predetermined rate when said difference length exists, *when the speed of the player character increases*") and is allowable.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection of dependent claims 2-5, 9-12, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, all dependent from claim 1, or 8, or 15, or 17, or 19, or 21, or 23, or 25 be also withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing and other considerations, all claims are deemed in condition for allowance. A formal indication of allowability is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge the undersigned's deposit account #14-1140 in whatever amount is necessary for entry of these papers and the continued pendency of the captioned application.

Should the Examiner feel that an interview with the undersigned would facilitate allowance of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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